



# *Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission*

## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 8, 2003

PRESS CONTACT: Tina Berger  
(202)289-6400

### **States Schedule Hearings on Draft Addendum VIII to the Summer Flounder FMP: *Public Comment Accepted until April 30***

Atlantic coastal states from Rhode Island through North Carolina have scheduled the dates and times of their hearings in order to gather public comment and input on Draft Addendum VIII to the Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Massachusetts will also be conducting public hearings, although the details of those hearings are not yet available. For more information, please contact Dan McKiernan, Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries, at (617)626-1536 or go to the agency website at [www.mass.gov/marinefisheries](http://www.mass.gov/marinefisheries).

Following are the details of the scheduled hearings:

#### **Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife**

***April 22, 2003; 7:00 PM***

URI Narragansett Bay Campus  
Corless Auditorium  
South Ferry Road  
Narragansett, Rhode Island  
Contact: Najih Lazar at (401)423-1926

#### **Connecticut Dept. of Environmental Protection**

***April 7, 2003; 7:00 PM***

Marine Headquarters Auditorium  
333 Ferry Road  
Old Lyme, Connecticut  
Contact: Eric Smith at (860)434-6043

#### **New York Dept. Environmental Conservation**

***April 24, 2003; 7:30 PM***

Marine Resources  
205 Belle Mead Road  
East Setauket, New York  
Contact: Byron Young at (631)444-0436

#### **New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife**

***April 9, 2003; 8:00 – 11:00 PM***

Richard Stockton College of New Jersey

A-Wing Lecture Hall

Jimmy Leeds Road  
Pomona, New Jersey  
Contact: Tom McCloy at (609)292-7794

And

***April 10, 2003; 7:00 – 10:00 PM***

Ocean County Administration Building  
Room 119  
101 Hooper Avenue  
Toms River, New Jersey  
Contact: Tom McCloy at (609)292-7794

#### **Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife**

***April 15, 2003; 7:30 PM***

89 Kings Highway  
Dover, Delaware  
Contact: Rick Cole at (302)739-4782

#### **Maryland Department of Natural Resources**

***April 15, 2003; 6:00 - 8:00 PM***

Tawes State Office Building Cafeteria  
580 Taylor Avenue  
Annapolis, Maryland  
Contact: Howard King at (410)260-8264

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission was formed by the 15 Atlantic coastal states in 1942 for the promotion and protection of coastal fishery resources. The Commission serves as a deliberative body of the Atlantic coastal states, coordinating the conservation and management of nearshore fishery resources, including marine, shell and anadromous species.

1444 Eye Street, N.W. -- Sixth Floor -- Washington, D.C. 20005  
(202)289-6400 (phone) (202)289-6051 (fax)  
[www.asmfcr.org](http://www.asmfcr.org)

PR09-03

**Maryland Department of Natural Resources**

***April 16, 2003; 6:00 - 8:00 PM***

Ocean Pines Library  
11107 Cathell Road  
Ocean City, Maryland  
Contact: Howard King at (410)260-8264

**Virginia Marine Resources Commission**

***April 15, 2003; 7:00 PM***

Fourth Floor Conference Room And  
2600 Washington Avenue  
Newport News, Virginia  
Contact: Jack Travelstead at (757)247-2247

**North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries**

***April 7, 2003; 7:00 - 9:00 PM***

Roanoke Island Festival Park  
1 Festival Park  
Manteo, North Carolina  
Contact: Red Munden at (252)726-7021

And

***April 16, 2003; 7:00 - 9:00 PM***

North Carolina State University  
Center for Marine Sciences & Technology (CMAST)  
303 College Circle  
Morehead City, North Carolina  
Contact: Red Munden at (252)726-7021

And

***April 17, 2003; 7:00 - 9:00 PM***

North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries District Office  
127 Cardinal Drive Extension  
Wilmington, North Carolina  
Contact: Red Munden at (252)726-7021

Since 1996, summer flounder recreational harvest has consistently exceeded established limits for the fishery. From 1996 to 1999, overages in the recreational landings ranged from 13 to 67 percent. In 2000, recreational landings were more than double the harvest limit, while 2001 landings were 60 percent in excess of the harvest limit. The impacts of these overages on the fishery are significant and extend beyond the recreational sector. Annual total allowable landings (TAL) are calculated assuming the preceding year's TAL and discard level are not exceeded. When regulations fail to constrain landings effectively the resulting exploitation rate is higher than the target, which leads to a state of overfishing and thus slower stock recovery.

The Commission's Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board developed Draft Addendum VIII in order to address the problem of overages in recreational landings. Specifically, the Draft Addendum presents the public with a suite of management options for the 2003 recreational summer flounder fishery, including strategies that allow for the repayment of harvest overages in the subsequent year(s), the carry-over of unused recreational harvest from one year to the next, and the allocation of commercial quota based on TAL limits calculated without recreational overages. It also includes the option to maintain the status quo.

"The Board fully recognizes that the problem of overages rests with the management program and in no way assigns blame to the recreational fishing industry for the harvest overages," stated Board Chair, Bruce Freeman of New Jersey. "However, given the persistent issue of recreational harvest overages and the impact of these overages on the resource, other users and our ability to effectively manage the fishery, it is incumbent for the Board to present these issues and possible management options to the public for their review and comment."

While summer flounder is managed jointly by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, the Board's actions regarding Draft Addendum VIII will be taken exclusively under the states' management authority.

Copies of Draft Addendum VIII can be obtained by contacting the Commission at (202) 289-6400 or via the Commission's website at [www.asmfmc.org](http://www.asmfmc.org). Public comment on the document will be accepted until **April 30, 2003** and should be forwarded to Michael Lewis, Fisheries Management Plan Coordinator, at 1444 Eye Street, Sixth Floor, Washington, DC, 200005; (202)289-6051 (fax); or [mlewis@asmfc.org](mailto:mlewis@asmfc.org). For more information, please contact Michael Lewis at (202) 289-6400, ext. 330.